

Reflection: nursing and mentors assignment



The NC set out standards of proficiency in nursing education to ensure pre-registration students are deemed fit for practice, both at the point of registration and beyond (NC, 2004). It stipulated that nurse education should be 50% practice focused, which would lead to pre-registration students becoming professionally proficient. The updated standards add that: “ Practice learning providers must ensure that a mentor or practice teacher is available to the student for at least 40% of the time during periods of practice learning” (NC, 2010).

The 2010 standards also stipulate that: “ Students are supervised directly or indirectly at all times during practice learning by a mentor, practice teacher or other suitably prepared registered professional. ” Mentors are expected to be able to develop and train students and the practice placement is the best place to build nursing knowledge, skills and professional attitudes (Levels-Jones and Lateran, 2008).

Practice placements are an important part of nurse education during which students have the opportunity to translate theory into practice, experience the “ real world of working”, learn about professional values and beliefs, and fulfill statutory requirements for registration with the NC (Higgins, 2004).

Improving the skills of mentors is a priority. National research reveals that mentors need more streamlined preparation and structured support to fulfill a diverse and demanding role as supervisors and assessors (Pope et al, 2003).

This extra education and support is intended to ensure they are fit for practice and purpose (Duffy, AAA). However, mentors have reported that

they feel unsupported (Duffy, Bibb) and struggle to appreciate the requirements of the role and the importance of their continuing professional development (CAP). Meeting the standards necessary to support learning and assessment in practice is crucial to ensure a high-quality workforce and that lifted nurses are prepared for the mentoring role (NC, Bibb).

After completing an NC-approved mentor preparation programmer, nurses are qualified to support, teach and assess pre-registration students during practice placements (NC, Bibb). This is crucial in developing student nurses' professional abilities, although it is recognizes as a challenging role due to the lack of protected time (NC, Bibb). However, higher education institutions rely on hightail mentoring to ensure students achieve as well in practice as they do in the classroom or academic setting.